



LAGOS  
MODEL  
UNITED  
NATIONS

# Research Tips & Resources

Lagos Model United Nations





Great research is the bedrock of a wonderful MUN experience. Research would make you prepared and help you with the tools to take on any challenge during the conference. Besides, good research comes in handy when you are writing your Position Paper before the Conference. Here are some tips to help you become a master researcher for your next MUN:

## Research Tips & Resources

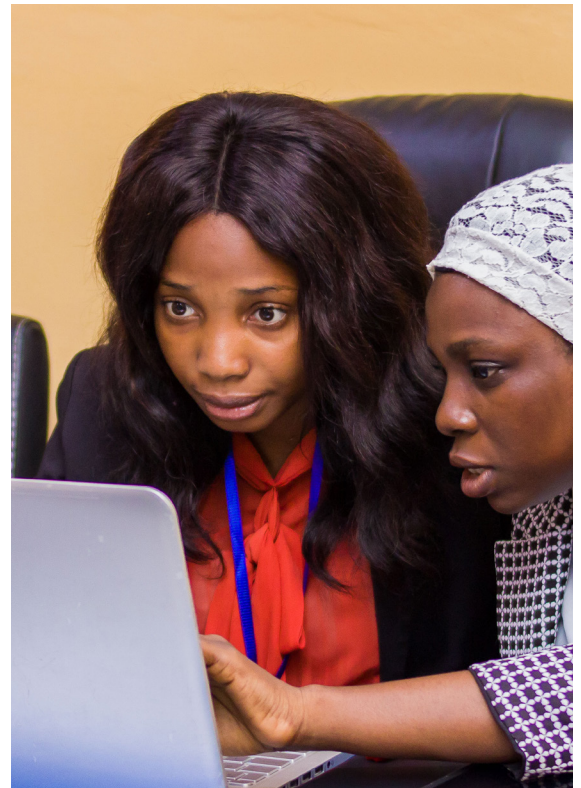
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# Read Conference Materials & Resources before the Conference

**M**any conferences including Lagos Model United Nations (LMUN) have a few guides prepared to help delegates understand the conference, their committees and topics better. These guides include the Delegate Prep Guide, Rules of Procedure, Position Paper Guide and your committee's Background Guide. Make sure to read all the guides before Conference day. Not only will they help you to be well-grounded, they also serve as a starting point for research on your topics and committees. For instance:

***Did you know** that the Background Guide contains links of the resources consulted by your Dias in writing your Background Guide? Did you also know that your Background Guide contains further research questions? These questions point you to the things that your Dias would like to see in your Position Papers and Working Papers.*





# Understanding and Researching the United Nations System & Structure

In carrying out your research, it is important to understand the UN system. Therefore, research on the entire UN and what role your committee plays in the entire structure is paramount. Find out what drives the organization, its strengths and weaknesses, its vision and agenda, and how your topic relates to all of it. Be abreast of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and what aspect of it affects your topics.



# Understanding and Researching Your Committee

**W**hat does your committee do? What is its mandate? How does it do what it does? What are its guiding principles and documents? Which other committee besides yours deals with the topic? What are its powers? What are its problems?

These are important questions to ask yourself and consult when you are researching on your committee. Committee research is very key in researching for any MUN. It guides you in writing your position paper, your speeches and helps you in putting your resolutions together. These questions would aid you in carrying out thorough research on your committee.





# Understanding and Researching Your Country

**Y**ou must do a thorough research on your country. It's history, government, culture, traditions, political structure, leadership, legislature, budget, national affairs, population, economy, religion and even your country's allies and enemies. This cannot be overemphasized because it guides you in everything you do as regards the conference. For instance, as an economically challenged country, it would be quite impractical for your country to consider donating huge funds to a project. And, if your country has a state religion, it means that everything you do must be with that in mind. To make it easier, you can have a binder or a word document on all the relevant information about your country.



# Understanding and Researching Your Topics

It is important to understand your committee's topics as they are and it is also important to understand it from your country's perspective. Ask yourself, what? how? when? why? where? Ask yourself questions such as, what is the general situation as regards the topic? What are the issues in the topic? What has the United Nations done about it? What are the international, regional and domestic frameworks? What has your committee done? What is your country's stand? What has your country done? What would your country do, keeping in mind its foreign policy and values? What are the possible solutions to the topic?





# Be Organized

Collect your thoughts and information. You can use a folder, a notebook, your laptop or a binder. For first time delegates, you may choose to create a research binder which would include all the information you have, portioned into sections such as committee information, country information and so on.



# Other Tips

- Use your primary and secondary sources. Both are equally important. Primary sources give direct information about the topic or issue. They usually give first-hand information. They include legislations, legal documents, books, eye-witness accounts, interviews and so on. While secondary sources give second-hand information on the topic. They usually describe events already treated in primary resources. For instance, published opinions of scholars, articles, newspaper reports and so on. To depict a clearer picture, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) is a primary source while, an article critiquing the UDHR is a secondary source.
- Beyond the conventional or 'usual' resources, make sure you are up to date on current or everyday trends and happenings as regards your topics. Sometimes, a new development has occurred but, it isn't reflected in a UN document until much later. So, be up to date and current on your topics. Newspapers and blogs could be very helpful with this.
- Read local publications of your country. For instance, local newspapers. This would help you with researching on what your country has done on the topic.
- Whatever happens, do not plagiarize another person's work. You can't write an exact sentence or an exact concept of someone's work, word for word. Yes, this is unacceptable even if you cite the author. If you are going to quote someone or their work, you need to put it in quotation marks. Plagiarism is deeply frowned upon at LMUN and is against the Rules of Procedure.
- Keywords are important when carrying out research. Use keywords to find the relevant resources you need online.
- Citations of documents and articles will help you with your research. So, make sure to check them, as you may find more useful sources from them.



# Common Questions & Concerns



***Q. What if my country hasn't done anything on the topic? What do I do?***

**A.** To determine that your country has not done much or anything on the topic, your research must have been very thorough. It means that they haven't even ratified or agreed to any document. They have done nothing even on the regional and sub-regional stage, and they have no visible intentions or plans to do something in the coming years. If after that, you discover that your country hasn't achieved anything on the topic, then it's best to come with that point of view. For instance, if you are a poor, small country without access to the Internet and the topic is on providing access to the internet, you should state that your country hasn't done anything on the topic and give the reasons for that. Then, state the ways forward and suggest ways that your country could be more active and how the committee and other countries can help you achieve that.

***Q. What if my country's foreign policy isn't clear?***

**A.** If your country's foreign policy is not clear, it may seem difficult, understandably. However, don't be discouraged. You can dive into resources such as speeches and statements regarding the topic from important government officials in your country. Also, you can look up the voting records of your country on resolutions or documents that have to do with the topic. This would help you to get a clearer picture of what your country's stand is.

# Some Resources for MUN Research

*The list is not exhaustive so please, look beyond these links for your research.*

## **CIA World Factbook**

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/>

## **World Statistics Pocketbook**

<https://unstats.un.org/unsd/publications/pocketbook>

## **BBC Country Profile**

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/country\\_profiles/default.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/country_profiles/default.stm)

## **UN Digital Library**

<https://digitallibrary.un.org>

## **UN General Assembly Resolutions**

<https://www.un.org/en/sections/documents/general-assembly-resolutions/index.html>

## **UN Document System**

<https://www.un.org/en/sections/general/documents/index.html>

## **Advanced Google Search Information**

<https://support.google.com/websearch/answer/2466433?hl=en>

## **UN General Assembly Voting Records**

<https://www.un.org/en/ga/documents/voting.asp>

## **UN Treaties**

<https://treaties.un.org/Pages/Home.aspx>

## **UN Library**

<https://library.un.org>

## **UN Permanent Missions**

<https://www.un.int>

## **US State Bilateral Fact Sheet**

<https://www.state.gov/u-s-bilateral-relations-fact-sheets/>

## **Sustainable Development Goals**

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs>

## **Google Scholar**

<https://scholar.google.com>

## **News**

### **UN News**

<https://news.un.org/en/>

### **Google News**

<https://news.google.com/>

### **Google Alerts**

<https://www.google.com/alerts>

### **Financial Times**

<https://www.ft.com>



# Some Resources for MUN Research Contd.

## **New York Times**

<http://www.nytimes.com>

## **The Economist**

<https://www.economist.com>

## **The Wall Street Journal**

<https://www.wsj.com>

## **Think Tanks and Policy Recommendations**

### **Amnesty International**

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/research/>

### **Aspen Institute**

<http://www.aspeninstitute.org>

### **Brookings Institute**

<https://www.brookings.edu>

### **Chatham House**

<https://www.chathamhouse.org>

### **Council for Foreign Relations**

<https://www.cfr.org>

### **Crisis Group**

<https://www.crisisgroup.org>



**That's it! See you at  
the conference!**